



Connecticut Commission  
on Culture & Tourism

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS**

### **Cultural Capital Grant-in-Aid: FAQs**

#### **Who is the Cultural Capital Grant (CCG) contact at the Commission on Culture & Tourism (CCT)?**

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#### **Who is eligible for a grant?**

Grant applicants are strictly limited to Connecticut non-profit organizations that have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code for at least two years. Federal and state agencies as well as municipalities, for-profit companies and individuals are not eligible to apply.

#### **What properties are eligible for grant funding?**

Connecticut buildings and structures that will primarily be utilized for cultural programs and activities including but not limited to dance, music, theater, studio arts, film and other visual media, art museums and heritage museums. Properties must be owned or leased long-term (20 years as of the date of application) by 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organizations from a municipality.

#### **Our building has an emergency (i.e., rain in the roof or basement, storm damage, etc.), does the CCG program fund emergency repairs?**

No. All awards are made through the established public process and grantees must go through the established procurement procedures. The CCT Capital Improvement Grant program is not an appropriate funding source for emergency repairs.

#### **How many Capital Improvement Grants can we have at one time?**

One. Any existing grant must be closed-out before your organization or municipality can be awarded a new grant.

#### **We have been awarded a CCG grant. Does that mean the state funding is available right now?**

No, CCG grant applications awarded by the Commission on Culture & Tourism must receive final approval and allocation by the State Bond Commission. It may take some time to be approved by the State Bond Commission and projects are not authorized to start before State Bond Commission approval is granted.

#### **How do we receive the grant payment?**

Grant funds are paid to grantees on a single-payment reimbursement basis following the completion of the project and approval of all work by CCT. All recipients of a grant which is funded from the proceeds of tax-exempt bond issues must receive and expend such funds only from the Tax-Exempt Proceeds Fund, Inc (TEPF). Grantees must set up a TEPF account. Contact the construction grants coordinator for more information.

**Why is a Professional Project Consultant required for a CCG project?**

A professional project consultant is required to help ensure the work is well-designed and uses adequate bid documents in the bidding process. For most projects the consultant will be an architect or structural engineer licensed to practice in Connecticut; acquisition projects require that an attorney licensed to practice law in Connecticut serve as the Project Consultant. A qualified historical architect or other appropriate professional consultant is required if the property is eligible to be listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places.

**Can we do our project in phases?**

Yes. Many nonprofit organizations must complete projects in phases, due to funding constraints. However, CCT staff will want to see a master plan or preservation plan to ensure that subsequent phases will protect CCG-funded improvements. Each phase requires a separate application. The CCG application process is competitive and there is no guarantee that subsequent phases will be funded.

**Can I begin work before the grant agreement contract is signed by all the required signatories?**

No. You do not have a approved, active project until you get a fully executed copy of the grant agreement and a written notice-to-proceed from the Commission on Culture & Tourism

**We already had a contractor doing work that the grant is supposed to cover. Can the grant “reach back” to reimburse for that work?**

No. The CCG program will not fund work that began prior to the execution of the grant contract, approval of the procurement process and notice-to-proceed.

**What does procurement mean?**

Procurement is the state-approved public bidding process by which the grantee seeks out and secures construction services. Grantees must obtain CCT-approval of bidding materials prior to seeking bids. Bid-level plans and specifications are required as part of the bidding materials.

**Can our consultant also bid on the construction work?**

No. Even if your qualified professional consultant is also a contractor (which is not typical), he or she cannot bid on the same project they helped design. To do so is a conflict of interest and is illegal.

**What do we do if we advertise as per procurement requirements but we receive less than three bids from contractors?**

If the project budget is less than \$100,000, you need to demonstrate that you followed approved procurement procedures. If your project is more than \$100,000, you must re-bid.

**What if bids come in higher than the budgeted amount?**

Before you create your bid package, ask your professional project consultant to include “add/alternates” to the base bid. This gives you options in case bids come in high. If, after your bids come in and they exceed your budget you can 1) reduce your scope of work and re-bid, or 2) as the grantee your organization or municipality can invest more of its own money in the project.